



PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: MARCH 8, 2004

ITEM NUMBER:

**SUBJECT: INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR
THE FAIRVIEW PARK MULTI-PURPOSE TRAIL,
FAIRVIEW PARK, 2501 PLACENTIA AV., COSTA MESA**

DATE: FEBRUARY 23, 2004


**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: CLAIRE L. FLYNN, AICP, ASSOCIATE PLANNER
(714) 754-5278**

DESCRIPTION

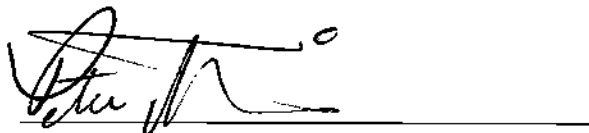
The multi-purpose trail will serve bicyclists, pedestrians, and athletes in Fairview Park. Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Planning Commission is required to review and adopt the initial study/mitigated negative declaration (SCH# 2004-021019) and corresponding mitigation monitoring program.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) and corresponding Mitigation Monitoring Program for the Fairview Park bicycle/pedestrian trail project


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Associate Planner


R. MICHAEL ROBINSON, AICP
Planning & Redev. Manager


PETER NAGHAVI
Transportation Services Manager


PERRY L. VALANTINE
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BACKGROUND

Developed by the Fairview Park Citizens Advisory Committee and City staff, the Fairview Park Master Plan was approved in March, 1998. The Master Plan promoted passive recreational activities that would not negatively impact sensitive biological resources, grasslands, and archaeological sites. The negative declaration for the Fairview Park Master Plan provided environmental analysis for the different elements of the Master Plan, including the multi-purpose trail. Thus, the multipurpose trail has been conceptually approved as a result of the City Council's adoption of the Fairview Park Master Plan and the programmatic environmental document.

The proposed multipurpose bike trail promotes the park's use by pedestrians, bicyclists, and athletes. Attachment 2 is an exhibit of the Fairview Park Master Plan showing the approved trails. Minor adjustments to the trail alignment at the northern and western sections have been made to avoid any adverse impacts to sensitive resources (Attachment 3). Therefore, it is not necessary for the Planning Commission to re-approve the multipurpose trail project since it is a previously approved project in the Fairview Park Master Plan. The purpose of the public hearing is to provide an opportunity for public comment on the project-specific negative declaration for the multipurpose trail and to allow the Planning Commission to adopt the negative declaration.

ANALYSIS

Project Location

Located in the northwest portion of Costa Mesa, Fairview Park consists of 208 acres bounded by the Santa Ana River (west), residential and institutional uses (north and south), and Costa Mesa Golf Course (east). The alignment traverses the east and west sides of Fairview Regional Park by crossing Placentia Avenue in two areas. A striped crosswalk is located at an existing signalized crossing at the southern crossing on Placentia Avenue. A pedestrian/bicycle bridge over Placentia Avenue is proposed at the northern crossing.

Project Description

The project has been approved in the Fairview Park Master Plan. In addition, the multipurpose trail is one of the major elements in the City of Costa Mesa Master Plan of Bikeways and is also part of the Orange County Commuter Bikeways Specific Plan (CBSP). The multipurpose trail is anticipated to provide bicycle commuting as well as recreational opportunities in the area via connections to the Santa Ana River Trail system, Talbert Nature Preserve, and beach trails. This project is consistent with the City's 2000 General Plan.

The multipurpose trail project is approximately 0.78 miles long (4,000 feet) and 12 feet wide. The trail functions as both a bicycle and pedestrian trail. The bicycle trail

section consists of six-inch thick concrete over a four-inch thick aggregate base. The pedestrian trail is directly adjacent to the bicycle trail section. This section measures four feet wide and consists of four-inch thick decomposed granite. Therefore, the multipurpose trail will be a total of twelve feet wide and approximately four to ten inches deep. The maximum depth of excavation for the construction will be approximately 18 inches from the existing grade. The proposed construction involves minor excavation and compaction along the 4,000-foot trail alignment. Once constructed, the multipurpose trail will be at the same grade as the existing grade level.

Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Due to the presence of sensitive biological and archaeological resources in Fairview Park, a mitigated negative declaration was prepared and circulated by the State Clearinghouse (SCH# 2004-021019) for a mandatory 30-day public review period (February 5, 2004 through March 6, 2004). Minor revisions to the IS/MND in response to comments received are shown in redlined/strike-out text (Attachment 4).

As discussed in the IS/MND, the City contracted with biologists and archaeologists to prepare the necessary technical studies for the project, as described in the following:

1. *Biological Resources Survey, January, 2004, Chambers Group, Inc.* Prior to performing the field survey, Chambers Group biologists reviewed existing documentation relevant to the project. They reviewed the most recent records of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB 2002) and the California Native Plant Society's Electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California (CNPSEI 2002). Lists from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) were also reviewed, and lists of sensitive wildlife and plant species potentially occurring within the project were developed. Several habitat assessments were conducted along the project site by Chambers Group to determine the relative quality or potential of the habitat types to support sensitive plant and wildlife species.
2. *Wintering Burrowing Owl Surveys in Fairview Park, Glenn Lukos Associates, December 29, 2003.* Reconnaissance-level surveys by Glenn Lukos Associates involved focused surveys for wintering burrowing owls at Fairview Park, on the east side of Placentia Avenue, at a site where a wintering burrowing owl was observed during the past two seasons. These surveys were conducted in November and December, 2003.
3. *Cultural Resources Study, January, 2004.* SWCA Environmental Consultants were retained to complete a cultural resources study for the multipurpose trail in Fairview Park. Due to the project's proximity to known archaeological sites and the ambiguous southern boundary for CA-ORA-506, an Extended Phase I study was accomplished to determine if intact subsurface cultural remains

were present within the Area of Potential Effects. The study consisted of a surface survey and a subsurface examination.

Mitigation Monitoring Program

The biologists have determined that the operation of the trail would not result in any significant, direct impacts to biological resources. The biologists identified indirect impacts related to short-term construction activities. The following mitigation measure relates to indirect impacts to vernal pools to ensure that best management practices are implemented during construction of the trail.

- Mitigation Measure 1 - The following best management practices are required to minimize any indirect effects of construction activities on vernal pools.
 - (a) Fencing, Flagging – Construction limits in the vicinity of vernal pools shall be fenced and flagged to ensure avoidance of these areas. Vernal pool areas shall be fenced to ensure that building materials are not displaced into these sensitive areas. Any other protective and avoidance methods as deemed appropriate by a biological monitor based on pre-construction surveys shall be implemented by construction contractors to ensure that there are no short-term construction-related impacts to vernal pool resources.

The archaeologists from SWCA, Inc. did not identify any significant impacts to cultural resources. Glenn Lukos Associates, Inc. did not identify any significant impacts to burrowing owls. Therefore, no mitigation measures are proposed. Please refer to the IS/MND for additional discussion of these topics.

ALTERNATIVES

If deemed necessary based on substantial evidence in the public record (e.g. biological technical report, archaeological studies), the Planning Commission may modify the environmental document by revising or adding mitigation measures. Adoption of the initial study/mitigated negative declaration is required before the California Department of Transportation will issue the construction permit for this permit. The construction permit would allow the City to secure a \$200,000 Federal grant for this project. Failure to adopt the initial study/mitigated negative declaration would indicate that the necessary environmental documentation has not been completed and may result in the loss of the grant funding.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the City's environmental processing procedures, an initial study/mitigated negative declaration was prepared. This IS/MND reflects the independent judgment of the City of Costa Mesa and indicates that the proposed project and mitigation measures could not have

a significant effect on the environment. Furthermore, the evidence in the record as a whole indicates that the proposed project, with mitigation measures incorporated, will not individually or cumulatively have an adverse effect on wildlife resources or habitat.

CONCLUSION

The adoption of the IS/MND and corresponding mitigation monitoring program is necessary to provide the environmental documentation for the multi-purpose trail project. This will allow the City to complete other subsequent activities required to expend a Federal grant in the amount of \$200,000 for this project.

Attachments: 1. Draft Resolution
 2. Fairview Park Master Plan Exhibit
 3. Proposed Multi-purpose Bike Trail Alignment
 4. Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH# 2004-021019)
 (provided as a separately bound document)

File Name: 030804FAIRVIEWBIKETRAIL Date : 02/26/04

Time: 7:30 am

cc: Deputy City Manager - Dev. Svcs. Director
 Sr. Deputy City Attorney
 City Engineer
 Fire Protection Analyst
 Transportation Svcs. Manager
 Associate Engineer
 Staff (4)
 File (2)

RESOLUTION NO. PC-04-

**RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA, CALIFORNIA
ADOPTING THE INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED
NEGATIVE DECLARATION (SCH# 2004-021019)
AND MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM FOR
THE FAIRVIEW PARK MULTI-PURPOSE TRAIL**

THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA HEREBY RESOLVES
AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, the Fairview Park Master Plan and corresponding programmatic negative declaration were adopted by the City Council of the City of Costa Mesa on March, 1998;

WHEREAS, the proposed multi-purpose trail was conceptually approved in the Fairview Park Master Plan and analyzed in the programmatic negative declaration;

WHEREAS, the initial study/mitigated negative declaration (State Clearinghouse Number 2004-021019) as a project-specific environmental document has been prepared for the Fairview Park Multi-purpose Trail in Fairview Park at 2501 Placentia Avenue;

WHEREAS, the initial study/mitigated negative declaration was prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the State CEQA Guidelines, and the City of Costa Mesa Environmental Guidelines;

WHEREAS, the City of Costa Mesa circulated the draft initial study/mitigated negative declaration for a 30-day period from February 5, 2004 through March 6, 2004 for public comment and review;

WHEREAS, a duly noticed public hearing was held by the Planning Commission on March 8, 2004 for public comment on the environmental document and with all persons having been given the opportunity to be heard;

WHEREAS, the City of Costa Mesa received written and verbal comments during the public review period and at the public hearing, and provided responses through text revisions to the environmental document or orally at the public hearing;

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has reviewed all environmental documents and technical reports and has found that the initial study/mitigated

negative declaration considers all environmental impacts of the proposed project, that mitigation is provided for any significant impact;

WHEREAS, the initial study/mitigated negative declaration reflects the independent judgment of the City of Costa Mesa; and

WHEREAS, the mitigation monitoring program is a program for reporting on or monitoring any required project changes, project design features, conditions of approvals, and/or mitigation measures to mitigate or avoid significant environmental effects.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Costa Mesa Planning Commission does hereby ADOPT the initial study/mitigated negative declaration AND mitigation monitoring program as complete, adequate, and fully supported by substantial evidence in that it addresses all environmental effects of the project and fully complies with the requirements of CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines, and the City of Costa Mesa Environmental Guidelines.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 8th day of March, 2004.

Chair, Costa Mesa Planning Commission

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
)ss
COUNTY OF ORANGE)

I, Perry Valantine, secretary to the Planning Commission of the City of Costa Mesa, do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was passed and adopted at a meeting of the City of Costa Mesa Planning Commission held on March 8, 2004, by the following votes:

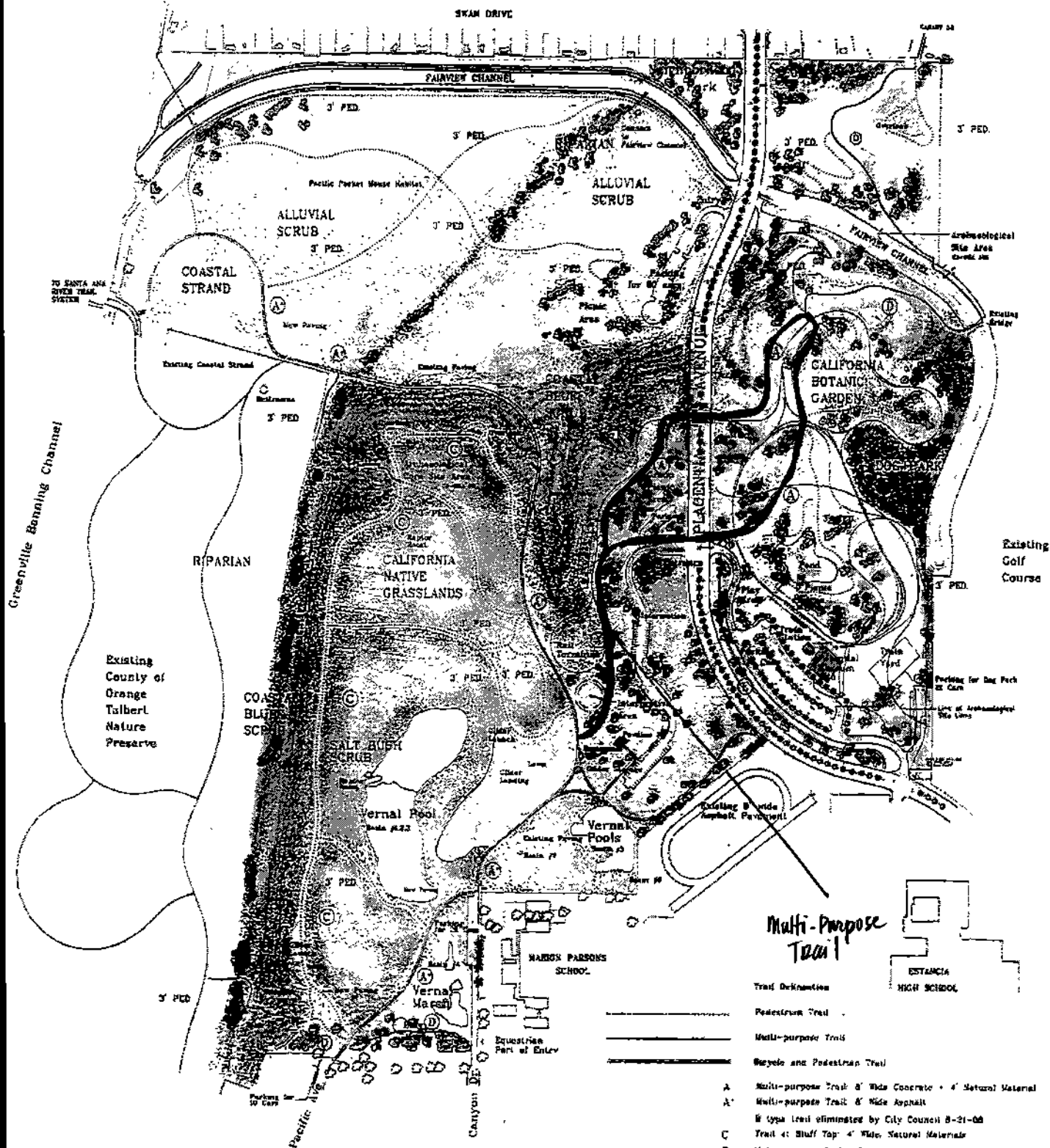
AYES: COMMISSIONERS

NOES: COMMISSIONERS

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS

Secretary, Costa Mesa
Planning Commission



Fairview Park

(9)

Multi-purpose Trail